

REMARKS:

At the time of the Final Office Action, claims 1-6, 8, 15, 17 and 19 were pending and considered by the Examiner. All of the pending claims stand rejected. Claims 1-6, 8, 15, 17 and 19 remain pending.

The claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Owens et al. (U.S. Design Patent 324,170), in view of Morse et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,050,770). The rejections are traversed for at least the following reasons.

The rejections are basically the same rejections as submitted in the Office Action dated March 23, 2005. In response to the March 23, 2005 Office Action, the applicant first argued that the modification of Owens et al. in view of Morse et al. is improper. The Examiner disagrees. The applicant reiterates that the proposed modification is improper for at least the reasons set forth in the amendment submitted on June 22, 2005. Even though it was argued that the modification is improper, in order to advance the prosecution of the application, the applicant also amended independent claims 1, 8 and 15. It is respectfully argued that the Examiner has failed to appreciate the limitations previously inserted into claims 1, 8 and 15. Thus, for at least the following reasons, it is respectfully argued that the claims are patentable over the cited references.

The devices of claims 1, 8 and 15 were amended to recite, among other things, that the body includes an indentation such that a bottom of the indentation is located above a top portion of the ring-shaped portion in an uncompressed state, and such that the bottom of the indentation is located below the top portion of the ring shaped portion in a compressed state. The Examiner seems to be of the impression that such limitations would be met by the combination of the cited references because, in the Examiner's opinion, the degree of compression is based on the amount of force applied. But, where exactly in Morse et al. does it teach or suggest that the bottom of the indentation will be located below the top portion of a ring shaped portion in a compressed state? It is respectfully argued that Morse et al. does not teach or suggest this limitation. In fact,

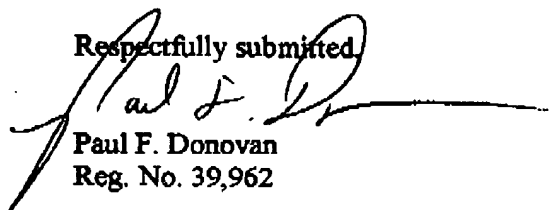
with reference to Fig. 2 of Morse et al., given the rigid structure of the device surrounding the bumper, it is respectfully argued that the bumper cannot function in accordance with the claimed invention of the subject application. In other words, the bumper is not capable of being compressed in such a manner that a bottom of the indentation will be located below the top portion of a ring shaped portion in a compressed state. The design of Owens et al. does not solve this deficiency of Morse et al. In short, the proposed combination, although improper in the applicant's opinion, does not teach or suggest all of the limitations recited in claims 1, 8 and 15. Thus, for at least these reasons, the pending claims as previously written are patentable over the art of record.

Reconsideration and allowance of all the pending claims is respectfully requested.

In the event that there are any remaining issues that need to be addressed, in order to expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the undersigned respectfully requests that the Examiner telephone him at the number provided below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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